

Tag-Out Drill

Goal: To make good throws to bases, set up properly to receive throws in tag-out situations, and apply the tag.

Setup: Place a complete defensive lineup in the field (minus the pitcher) and set up situations where there could be tag outs (see figure 9.30).

Description: Start with no one on base and hit a ball in one of the outfield gaps, but not past the outfielders. Make it short enough so that the throw can be made all the way to the base without a cutoff person. The running group is attempting to get to second base no matter what. The outfielder's job is to cut off the ball and make the throw all the way to the bag. The proper middle infielder should straddle the bag, receive the throw, and attempt to make the tag. Keep score. The running group gets a point for making it to second, and the defense gets a point for recording the out.

Change the situations: Have the runners attempt to go from first to third and from second to home. Also bring the infield up and have players try to score from third on ground balls to the infield. This also can be done in leagues that permit stealing by having the runners try to steal. You will need a pitcher to do this.

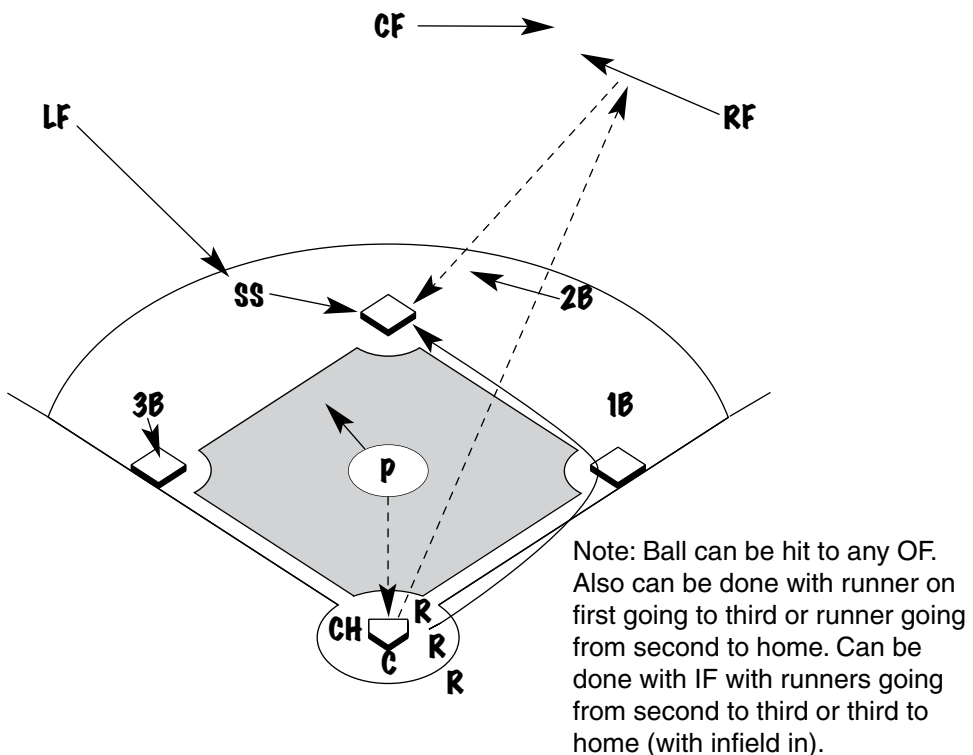


Figure 9.30 Setup for Tag-Out Drill.

To make the game easier, do the following:

- Don't use an outfielder.
- Don't allow leadoffs.

To make the game harder, do the following:

- Allow leadoffs.
- Hit the ball to spots that make the play difficult.

Multitasking: You can work on many facets of offense and defense during this drill. Baserunners can practice making proper turns, sliding to avoid tags, and getting jumps on stolen base attempts. You also can mix in some fly balls, ground balls to the left side, and so on to simulate certain tricky baserunning situations. Balls can be hit a little deeper to allow the defense to work on cutoffs and relays. Pitchers can be incorporated and taught how to back up throws to the bases.
